

19 March 1981

8. How does linking the NFAC production plan to the NITs make the product more responsive to consumer demands? Are the NITs that timely?

In their production planning, NFAC offices indicate what NIT or NITs a proposed project will address. While this serves to keep analysts and management mindful of the NIT questions and to help monitor our responsiveness to key consumer needs, the extent to which we do respond to specific NITs varies with the complexity of the related questions and with the amount of intelligence information we obtain. A recent effort to evaluate the responsiveness of the Intelligence Community (NFAC State/INR, and DIA) to the NITs of Current Interest for the period July through December 1980 found a considerable volume of NIT-related analytic production. The survey concluded that the Community's response to the more specific, answerable, and transient NITs (especially those relating to crisis areas such as Aghanistan, Iran, and Poland) was quite good--better than it was against the more general, heuristic, and enduring Topics, such as Soviet chemical and biological warfare capabilities or the stability of various Middle East regimes.

The survey also found that, while some current NITs were quickly overtaken by events or by higher priority issues during the six-to-nine-month period between updating, other NITs proved highly anticipatory for the intelligence collector and analyst. We continue to believe that the current NIT cycle affords sufficient timeliness to convey the major, short-term interests of senior foreign policy officials and that alternative means are available, including frequent review of DCID 1/2 requirements and priorities, for transmitting critical new demands to the Intelligence Community. Moreover, DCID 1/2 itself is driven in the first instance by the NITs.

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